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REVIEWS AND NEW BOOKS

General Works, Theory and Its History

Theories of Social Progress. A Critical Study of the Attempts to Formulate the Conditions of Human Advance. By ARTHUR JAMES TODD. (New York: The Macmillan Company. 1918. Pp. xii, 579. \$2.25.)

This work, we are told, is the outcome of an attempt to teach a course for which no text was available. The first of its four parts aims to lay the foundation of a theory of social progress by demonstrating the "plastic and potentially progressive" character of human nature. Not the whole of human nature is considered, but only the concept or sense of self. This is shown to grow with the development of the individual and the race, and to be a social product.

Part II treats of the concept and criteria of progress. Progress is not merely change or movement. It implies a goal, "a standard of value and achievement." Professor Todd somewhere observes that "perhaps" the concept belongs to philosophy rather than to the social sciences. In spite of this admission, he accepts the problem of progress as a task for the sociologist and professes "to demonstrate as objectively as possible" the validity of his standard. In the preface also he defines his method as that of "appeal to objective fact." After discussing various criteria of human advance, he concludes that the "basic test" is an "interest in human well being," which "looks forward" to the realization of an "ethical order." What this ethical order is, we are not told. The "latitude and longitude of society's destination" remain indeterminate. But without a definite ideal, a theory of social progress is worthless. Is "sociology," therefore, to penetrate to the realms of philosophic speculation to fix its "standard of value" and concept of a desirable "ethical order"? If so, why not call it social philosophy henceforth and have done with its misbegotten name? But are our sociological colleagues qualified to deal with questions of philosophy? Would they not do well to confine themselves to description and analysis, and to the theory of social change rather than of social progress?

Part III, the larger part of the work, discusses the "prophets of progress." Their theories are classified as (a) materialistic, (b) biological, (c) institutional, (d) ideological. The "economic

interpretation of history," in the first group, is preceded by chapters on the geographic determinists, the "technicians or inventivists," money, capital, the division of labor. Under the heading "institutional" are chapters on property, the family, government, law, public opinion, great men and the élite, language, and religion. Under "ideological" come the idealists, the intellectuals, the artists. There is lacking a thorough consideration of the phenomena of class control and class struggle. In the discussion of each theory or cluster of ideas, no effort is made to indicate the distinctive contribution or formulation of particular writers. The work differs in this respect from the histories of sociology by Barth, Squillace, and Bristol. For a critical study Professor Todd's is the better method, but in almost every case he has produced such a jumble of facts and ideas that he falls below these authors in clearness of exposition and criticism. He has, however, given forcible expression to many excellent ideas and his book contains evidence of wide reading and some thinking.

In part IV, entitled Implications and Conclusions, the author soars. "Up to this point, the various theories of human progress have on the whole regarded man either as the pawn of exterior powers and forces . . . or as only indirectly conspiring at progress. . . . Now we must look at man as a conscious agent aiming directly at his own improvement and advance." How is such purposeful progress to be brought about? "The great difficulty is that society is not yet clearly self-conscious, self-knowing." But sociology and psychology are coming to the rescue. Professor Todd does not ask what would happen to a perfected social science, if it became common property, that is, if society should come to be really self-conscious and self-knowing. The social sciences treat of the unintended, unforeseen results of a myriad of human activities. Men might not behave as they do, if they were all expert sociologists and knew the collective outcome of their acts. Perhaps a perfected and generally promulgated science of society would, like perfect price-speculation, destroy its own *raison d'être*. He also fails to raise the more serious question as to whether such perfected knowledge would ever be allowed to become common property. His faith is in "social education." It will raise humanity from "ages of blind drift to a plane of mastery." It will convert the most "cross-grained human natures" into "coöoperators, good citizens, and members of a great united brotherhood." If, however, we should ask who is to educate the edu-

cators, Professor Todd would probably answer, "The sociologist." At least we are told that "with applied sociology and an education leavened by it rests the problem of harmonizing more closely through enlightened will the facts of social achievement and progressive social welfare."

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NEW BOOKS

JOHNSON, J. F. and McVEY, F. L. *Economics of business. I. Production, consumption and value. II. Exchange and distribution.* (New York: Alexander Hamilton Inst. 1918. Pp. xv, 326.)

McPHERSON, L. G. *How the world makes its living.* (New York: Century Co. 1916. Pp. vii, 435. \$2.)

This book is not so much a discussion of the concrete problem of "how the world makes its living" as an exposé of the author's views concerning certain phases of economic theory. As Mr. McPherson states in the preface, what he attempted to do was to outline briefly the evolution of the institution of property as well as to trace the significance of the related phenomena of money, capital, rent, interest, wages, prices, and profit. The volume contains also chapters on the "living" of plants and animals, on the supremacy of man, on speculation, on crises and panics, on the organization of business, and on the relation of the government to industry and commerce. It concludes with an endeavor "to forecast the goal that may be attained through promoting step by step, in the light of a clear understanding, the progress that has been the outgrowth of the ages." The author deprecates the present-day conflict between capitalists and laborers, holding both parties responsible for the struggle, and he points out the need for a greater unity of purpose and a greater degree of coöperation in our economic activities.

The work is characterized by simplicity and clearness of expression. Mr. McPherson gives a comprehensive account of the development of our roundabout methods of production and distribution, devoting a great deal of space to the presentation of facts of how modern civilized existence is dependent upon the exchange of commodities and services, upon the flow of utilities and value. As to his inquiry into the nature of property, value, price, and interest, and as to his elucidation of what determines the shares of the national dividend that go to each of the factors of production, one is almost tempted to envy the ease with which he approaches and disposes of some of the most perplexing and subtle problems that have baffled many an economist. The rates of wages and of interest, the amount of rent and of profit, the price of goods—all, according to Mr. McPherson, are determined by the relation between supply and demand (pp. 139, 150, 170, 199, etc.). This law of supply and